

99% of St. Charles Residents Surveyed Say St. Charles is an Excellent or Good Place to Live

City of St. Charles 2020 Survey Results Show High Resident Satisfaction Continues

99% of residents surveyed feel St. Charles is an Excellent or Good place to live. The results of the 2020 St. Charles Resident Survey were presented at the Sept. 8, 2020 Government Operations Committee Meeting. In general, survey respondents feel St. Charles is safe, clean and well maintained. Residents also valued the services they receive for the taxes they pay.

“I couldn’t be happier with the results,” say Mayor Raymond Rogina. “Residents’ overwhelming satisfaction is the result of much hard work from many individuals. From the City Council, Commission members, and City staff to active community organizations and engaged residents, our community benefits from having so people working together to make St. Charles the best it can be.”

The survey, which the City of St. Charles conducts every few years, assesses residents’ perspectives on the overall quality of life in St. Charles. A survey of residents has been conducted since 1996, with the last one performed in 2016.

“Community feedback is crucial for gauging service levels, funding prioritization, and general satisfaction with the City’s performance,” said City Administrator Mark Koenen. “The St. Charles Resident Survey is one of the most effective tools we use to collect resident input. In addition to highlighting high-performing areas, the survey reflects priorities we need to focus on.”

In March 2020, surveys were distributed to a statistical sample of St. Charles residents by the ETC Institute, the City contractor for this project. More than 500 surveys were completed, representing a statistically significant sample that accurately reflects the Census demographics of St. Charles.

Below are some notable findings. Percentages represent residents surveyed who rated St. Charles as “excellent” or “good.”

Areas the City Excels

- A place to live: 99%
- A Place to Raise Children: 98%
- Quality of Life: 96%
- Overall Reputation of St. Charles: 96%
- Quality of City Services: 91%

Areas the City Improved Since the Last Survey in 2016

- Value for City tax dollars and fees: 70% up from 53%
- Access to shopping: 73% up from 56%

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Ask Us

Have a question you would like to ask? Send it to info@stcharlesil.gov, Subject: Ask Us and it could be answered in an upcoming issue.

Meetings

For a complete list of upcoming public meetings, including City Council, Committee and Commission meetings, visit our website at www.stcharlesil.gov/meetings. Agendas are posted the Friday prior to the meeting. Minutes are posted after they are approved.



Contact Us

[Click to view a complete list of City Contacts](#)



Resident Survey Results (cont.)

Priorities Identified by Residents

- Value received for City tax dollars and fees
- Management of traffic congestion
- Condition of neighborhood streets
- Water, sewer, and electric rates
- 75% of respondents indicated they would subscribe to push notifications from the City

These statistics are a just a snapshot of an entire summary, and we encourage you to take a closer look at the findings. [Click here for the full report.](#)



From the Mayor's Desk

Friends,

After serving the City of St. Charles as an elected official for 10 years, I have decided against seeking a third term as Mayor in the upcoming April 2021 election.

This early announcement is done with succession in mind so those eager to vie for the Mayor's Office have time to provide thoughtful consideration and development of their candidacy.

I look forward in the remainder of my term continuing to guide the City, with my colleagues on the city council, to a conclusion of the ongoing pandemic and development of worthy projects already in a concept stage.

I am so fortunate for having had the opportunity to serve this community that I love for so long and in so many different roles. Before my eight years as Mayor and two years as Ward 3 Alderman, I spent 30 years as department chairperson in Business Education, and an instructor in Law and Economics at St. Charles East High School.

I have met so many people in my tenure as an elected official, including encountering former students who are now in leadership roles. And I have thoroughly enjoyed being an unabashed cheerleader for St. Charles. The enrichment I have derived from my role as mayor is beyond description.

See you around town,

Ray Rogina

Mayor

Welcome Ward 3 Alderman Lucy Gruber



Lucy Gruber was sworn in as Ward 3 Alderman at the at the Sept. 21, 2020, City Council Meeting.

Five candidates were interviewed for the open 3rd Ward seat by Mayor Rogina and the aldermen in an executive session, Sept. 8, 2020. Mayor Rogina selected Gruber for appointment with the advice and consent of the full City Council.

Gruber will serve the remaining eight months left in the term of the 3rd Ward alderman seat, following the resignation of former Alderman William Turner on Aug. 10, 2020.

Lucy Gruber grew up in St. Charles and currently is an emergency Management Specialist with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) – Department of Homeland Security. She graduated from Hope College in Holland, Mich., with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and a Minor in Communication.

“As a recent college graduate who chose to return to St. Charles, Lucy represents an interesting demographic,” said Mayor Rogina. “It was the general consensus that we, as a Council, could gain so much from incorporating the fresh perspective Lucy will bring. She is part of an important segment of our population who has the ability to significantly contribute to the long-term vitality of St. Charles.”

A Few Minutes with Ward 3 Alderman Lucy Gruber



Lucy Gruber was sworn in as Ward 3 Alderman at the at the Sept. 21, 2020, City Council Meeting by Judge Elizabeth Flood.

What are you looking forward to regarding serving on City Council?

I could not be more thankful and excited to join such a dedicated and talented team of professionals who are committed to serving the city of St. Charles. I am looking forward to gaining an opportunity to build relationships with people inside the 3rd Ward and within the greater St. Charles area. I look forward to immersing myself in the inner workings of the city and contribute in any way possible. I grew up in a family friendly cul-de-sac in the Timbers neighborhood and spent my childhood biking to Smitty's, volunteering at Lazarus House, and working at the Park District. Wild Rose, Haines, and St. Charles North High School fostered a spirit within me of stewardship, passion for

people, leadership, and commitment to community. I had the privilege to serve on the St. Charles Business Alliance as the North High School representative and was able to experience my first glimpse into the innerworkings of local government. So much of who I am, I owe to the teachers and employers who encouraged me and helped me grow into someone who is committed to pursuing a career which is invested in serving my community. It is an honor to have this opportunity to be a part of the working body that enacts change and preserves the incredible heritage St. Charles has to offer.

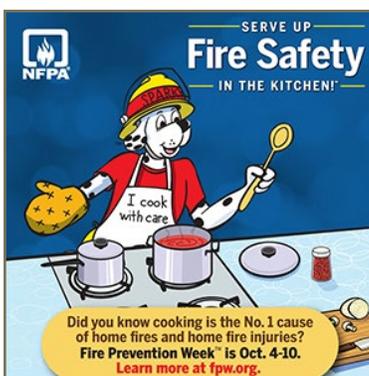
Why was it important for you to run for your position?

When I saw the vacant 3rd Ward Alderman seat announcement, I knew that it was an opportunity I was eager to pursue. I feel enthusiastic when I think about representing a demographic of our community that is becoming more actively involved in public affairs. Whether it is social justice, community engagement, or business development, these items of interest are at the forefront of the minds of many young adults in St. Charles. There is a great deal of opportunity to integrate the young adults of St. Charles with the wisdom of the already established community members whom I value highly. I feel confident that I can exemplify a unique perspective that engages an emerging and growing part of the greater St. Charles culture. The Council is comprised of an incredible collection of community leaders. The wealth of knowledge and areas of expertise that each member brings is extremely valuable. I really look forward to learning, growing, and helping shape my hometown.

What do you see as a great opportunity for St. Charles?

One of the most intriguing things about St. Charles is the growing population of young professionals living in our town to begin their careers and build connections. I am extremely excited about the opportunity to grow the reputation of St. Charles as a place for young professionals to enjoy both a vibrant downtown environment and a solid area to plant roots. The combination of exceptional community support, top-rated schools, and a rapidly growing downtown makes St. Charles more of a destination than it has ever been before. I love that St. Charles has both a proud tradition and a bright future.

PUBLIC SAFETY



Fire Prevention Safety Week is Oct. 4-10

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the St. Charles Fire Department will not be holding an open house for Fire Prevention Safety Week this year. However our firefighters will be producing a series of fire safety videos to spread the word about fire prevention and safety that we will post on our YouTube channel.



Firefighters Fill the Boot for Muscular Dystrophy

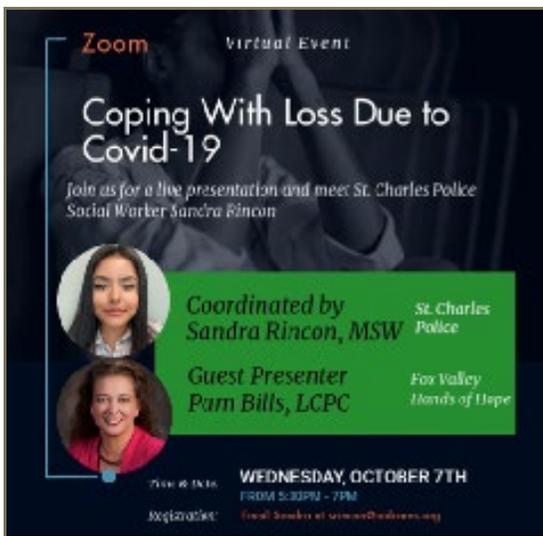
For more than 60 years, firefighters have hit the streets for the “Fill the Boot” campaign, collecting donations for the Muscular Dystrophy Association. Muscular dystrophy, ALS, and other life-threatening neuromuscular diseases take away basic abilities, like walking, talking, eating, and hugging.

This year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the St. Charles Fire Department is conducting a virtual campaign online. Fill the Boot may look different, but the goal is still the same. All proceeds go to the Muscular Dystrophy Association to help children and adults in our community, and to support innovative research.

[Click here to find out more or to donate.](#)

This year, St. Charles firefighters won't be out collecting spare change to “Fill the Boot” like last year. The 2020 campaign for Muscular Dystrophy is virtual.

Social Worker Supports Our Police & Fire Departments



When police officers or firefighters respond to a call and arrive at the scene, they often find that the situation requires additional professional assistance. Sometimes it's clear that crisis intervention services for traumatized victims, mental illness, or other issues are desperately needed. That's when the expertise of Sandra Rincon, the St. Charles Police Social Worker comes in.

Since 2014, the St. Charles Police Department has contracted with the Association for Individual Development, an agency that provides on-call victims services 24/7, supporting both police and fire departments.

“The Police Department social worker acts as a liaison between the Department, the community, and various social services agencies that serve our residents,” said Deputy Chief Chuck Pierce. “A police social worker does not provide long term counseling, but rather assesses quality of life issues, attempts to stabilize those issues, and provides the proper referrals necessary to help long-term success of managing the issues.”

Police Social Worker Hosting Zoom Webinar

Coping with Loss Due to COVID-19

COVID-19 has disrupted many aspects of our lives and has resulted in much loss...loss of a loved one, lost job, lost connections, loss of normalcy, and much more.

Join St. Charles Police Social Worker Sandra Rincon Oct. 7 for a virtual Zoom presentation about coping with loss due to COVID-19. [Click here for information about how to register.](#)



2020 Leaf Collection Program



Leaf collection starts Oct. 28 on the east side of the river and Nov. 3 on the west side. The City’s contractor, Kramer Tree Service, will complete three collection cycles across the City, with an anticipated completion date of Nov. 30. Daily progress of the collection crews can be found at Kramer Tree Services’ website:

[Kramer Leaf Collection Map](#)

In addition, Lakeshore Recycling Systems will provide free bagged leaf collection in December, through Dec. 22, for any remaining leaves. Pick up is on your regular refuse collection day.

LEAF COLLECTION REMINDERS

- Please have leaves on the parkway by 6:30 a.m. on the beginning day of pick up for your area
- It may take three to four days for leaves to be collected in your specific area.
- A smaller truck will collect the leaves in the cul-de-sacs.
- Leaf piles will not be picked up if obstructed by parked vehicles or other obstacles. The piles will be picked up on your next scheduled pick up when the obstruction is removed.
- Please keep a distance of approximately 10’ between leaf piles and permanent structures, e.g., fire hydrants, trees, streetlight poles, etc.
- Rake leaves in a row parallel to the street at least 1’ back from the curb and off the sidewalk.
- Inclement weather or a large volume of leaves could alter the leaf pickup schedule.
- Pushing leaves into the street is a violation of Ordinance 12.04.170, punishable by a fine up to \$500.00 for each offense.
- Leaf piles will not kill grass although they may cause it to discolor.
- Avoid raking foreign materials into leaf piles as these could damage equipment or cause injury to personnel.
- This program is funded by a portion of the fee collected on the utility bills of eligible homeowners. Check your utility bill or call Utility Billing at 630-377-4426 with questions about your eligibility for this program.

Be sure to check back here for updates, call Public Works at 630-377-4405 or Kramer Tree Specialists at 630-293-5444 or email pw@stcharlesil.gov.

Pick up is not available for the following subdivisions/areas:

- Cumberland Green
- Whittington Course, Royal Fox private streets, Dunham Place Commons, Delnor Townhomes, Delnor Glen Drive
- Townes of Fox Chase
- Walnut Hill Townhomes
- Viewpointe
- Willowgate
- Wildrose Springs Townhomes, Auburn Court, Benham Court, Oak Crest
- Brownstones

Other Seasonal Collection Services

Brush Pick Up

- East Side Oct. 19
- West Side Oct. 26

Yard Waste

Lake Shore Recycling will provide free bagged leaf/yard waste collection the entire month of December

This is in addition to regular City services



PUBLIC WORKS NOTES

Storm Sewers and Leaves Don't Mix



When preparing your leaves for collection, do not place the leaves on the street. This is a violation of City code and residents may be subject to a fine up to \$500. The public storm system plays a vital role in protecting our properties and roadways from flooding during rain events. The system's ability to effectively convey storm water runoff during heavy rains can be compromised due to leaves and litter being washed down the street in a rain storm and plugging the grates and inlets. Residents can help protect their property from flooding by keeping the storm sewer grating near their home free of leaves, litter, and other debris.

Please contact the Public Works Department at 630.377.4405 if you have any questions.

Hydrant Flushing Continues on the East Side



Fall hydrant flushing continues in neighborhoods east of the river on the following dates:

Southeast (south of Main St.) – Sept. 28-Oct. 2

Northeast (north of Main St. & west of Dunham Road) – Oct. 5-9

Northeast (north of Main St. & east of Dunham Road) – Oct. 12-16

Watch for signs in neighborhoods announcing hydrant flushing. Flushing may start as early as 5 a.m. and continue through 4 p.m. Water is safe to use and consume during hydrant flushing, however, you may notice rust-colored water temporarily. [Click here for frequently asked questions about hydrant flushing.](#)

For more information, visit the [hydrant flushing page on the City website](#) or contact Public Works at 630.377.4405.



CITY NOTES

Historic Landmark of the Month

“The Beckstrom House”



October's Landmark of the Month is the Beckstrom House, located at 512 Indiana Street. The house was built in 1904 in the Homestead Style architecture. The home possesses typical features of the Homestead style, such as the rectangular plan and simple gabled roof. As with many Homestead structures, this house has wood frame construction, including clapboard siding. Overall, the house has been unaltered on the outside and retains

many of the original details interiorly, making it a pristine example of Homestead architecture. The Beckstrom House is named after Charles and Eva Beckstrom, the original owners of the property.

For more information about Historic Preservation, please visit www.stcharlesil.gov/historic-preservation



Beckstrom House
512 Indiana St.
Built ca. 1904

Important Information about Past Due Utility Bills

The City has released [new procedures to help residents struggling to get their utility payments up-to-date](#) in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Please contact us regarding repayment before Dec. 1, 2020, to avoid disconnection. Contact Utility Billing at 630.377.4426 or utilitybilling@stcharlesil.gov.

Overnight Parking for Recreational and Commercial Vehicles



The City does not ban parking on city streets overnight for most vehicles. There are, however, restrictions on parking recreational and commercial vehicles overnight.

Which vehicles are allowed to park on City streets overnight?

One passenger car or a truck with a “B” license plate, such as a pickup truck.

How long can allowed vehicles be parked on the street?

No longer than 24 hours.

Which vehicles are not allowed to park overnight?

1. Any vehicle with a “D” license plate or higher, and vehicles such as motor homes, pop-up campers, trailers, boats, boat trailers, tow trucks, buses, cargo trucks, semi trucks, etc.
2. Pickup trucks equipped with a snow plow—even though they may have a “B” license plate.

Can prohibited vehicles ever park overnight on the street?

Permission may be granted by the Police Department to park one unoccupied motor home for a maximum of 48 hours on a residential street. A permit must be obtained in advance and displayed in the front windshield of the vehicle. No more than 2 permits shall be granted in any 12-month period.

Storage of Recreational Vehicles

Recreational vehicles may be stored outside in residential districts according to these regulations:

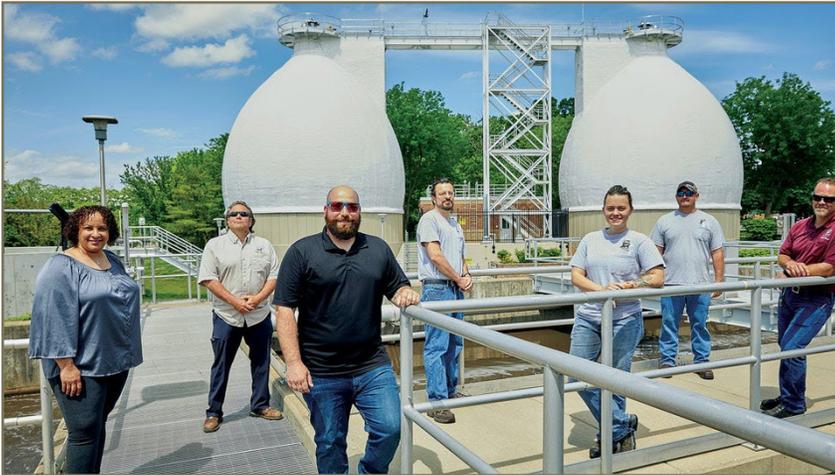
1. Only one recreation vehicle allowed per lot.
2. A recreational vehicle must be parked on a hard surface at all times.
3. One recreational vehicle only may be parked on a driveway or other hard surface from April 15 to October 15. From October 15 to April 15, no recreational vehicle shall be parked or stored in the required front yard or exterior side yard except for a period of 48 hours for loading or unloading. Building and Code Enforcement staff will enforce the front yard and exterior side yard parking restriction.
4. No recreational vehicle shall be parked on private property that impairs the safety of pedestrians or vehicular traffic.

For more information, contact the Building and Code Division at 630.377.4406 or review the ordinances [17.24.120 - Commercial Vehicles](#) and [17.24.130 - Recreational Vehicles](#) online.

Student Representatives Needed

The St. Charles Natural Resources Commission is seeking high school and college students to fill openings for Student Commissioners. If you're a high school student or a college student residing in St. Charles, and interested in green infrastructure, trees, environmental programs and awareness, natural resources conservation and education, please contact mdargento@stcharlesil.gov or call 630.377.4405.

Wastewater Treatment Plant Project in the Spotlight



St. Charles Wastewater Treatment Operators from left: Christina Smith, Dan Massa, Chris Rebone, Richard Wadda, Samantha Metallo, John Huver and Steven O'Neil. Photo: tpomag.com

The St. Charles Wastewater Treatment Plant renovation project recently was featured in the September issue of [Treatment Plant Operator Magazine](#), a nationally distributed magazine dedicated to municipal wastewater professionals.

[The front-page article](#) highlights the two-year, \$17 million renovation project which added a new phosphorus removal process to meet an Illinois EPA mandate, and updated the digestion and biogas systems at the main wastewater treatment plant. The project began in 2017 and finished up last year.

In addition to the Public Works Department wastewater treatment operators featured in the article, we also would like to recognize that this national spotlight was possible because of many

dedicated staff, consultants, and City leaders. The total team effort began many years ago with Public Works Department management guidance, Finance Department expertise, City Administration support, City Council trust/approvals and finally, as celebrated in this article, the execution of the award-winning project by the Public Works Environmental Services Division. Congratulations to all for completing a truly visionary project.

Public Power Week Celebrates Local Service

Oct. 4-10, 2020

Since 1892, St. Charles has operated its own electric utility. It is one of 2,000+ community electric utilities nationwide that provides not-for-profit electric service to its citizens. National Public Power Week recognizes electric utility staff for operating and maintaining reliable, efficient electric service.

What are the Benefits of Having a Local Power Utility?

1. We work for each and every resident and business of St. Charles, not a group of shareholders.
2. When you call about an issue, you are talking to someone in your community. And often the work is done by professionals who live right here in St. Charles. Our crews are dispatched out of our Public Works Facility on 7th Avenue, allowing us to quickly and efficiently respond to outages or problems.
3. We are non-profit—we're not out to make money from our services.
4. Any improvements made to the power system directly benefit residents in our community.

“The men and women of the St. Charles Electric Utility are proud to provide our community safe, reliable, and cost-effective electric services,” said Paul Hopkins, Electric Services Manager.

For more information, contact the City's Electric Utility at 630.377.4407.





Visit Your Forest Preserves Virtually



Forest Preserve District of Kane County Series

If you cannot or prefer not to visit your local forest preserves right now, the Forest Preserve District of Kane County will bring the preserves to you. See their “Nature, Virtually Everywhere” series of programs. Learn about citizen science stream monitoring, tag along on a virtual hike, see the importance of tallgrass prairies, and more! Visit <https://kaneforest.com/nature-virtually-everywhere>



Voting Options for the Nov. 3, 2020 General Election

Kane County voters have three convenient ways to vote in this year’s General Election:

1. Vote by Mail. Visit www.kanecountyclerk.org/Elections/Pages/Vote-by-Mail.aspx
Contact the Kane County Clerk’s Office for details at 630.232.5990.
2. In-person Early Voting began Sept. 24. For details, including a complete list of voting sites, visit www.kanecountyclerk.org/Elections/pages/early-voting.aspx
3. Visit a polling place on Election Day Nov. 3. Polls are open from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. For more information, visit www.kanecountyclerk.org/Elections/Documents/podr009_publicationpolls_kane.pdf

St. Charles Chamber of Commerce is Hosting a City Update

Oct. 6, 2020 12:30 p.m.

Get an update on the latest happenings at the City from Mayor Rogina & Ward 1 Alderman Dan Stellato. In-person tickets are sold out, but you can participate virtually. Registration is \$10. Sign up at www.stcharleschamber.com

Scarecrow Stroll

October 9-11, 2020



The 35th annual Scarecrow Fest will look very different this year. The St. Charles Business Alliance planned this year’s activities to encourage social distancing, while also supporting local businesses.

Scarecrows entered in the contest will be placed around town and will be paired with local businesses. Stroll

along downtown to admire the scarecrows and visit the businesses, which will offer Scarecrow Stroll related deals, specials, and events.

There’s more fun to be had with a Drive-In Concert organized with the St. Charles Park District, a scavenger hunt downtown, a live-streaming pumpkin carver, and a photography station in Lincoln Park.

Take home some Scarecrow fun with a local Craft Beer Box featuring St. Charles brews for adults or a Scarecrow in a Box for kids to make their own scarecrow at home. For details, including how to volunteer, visit www.scarecrowfest.com.



Halloween House Decorating Contest

Register your home for the St. Charles Park District's Halloween House Decorating Contest and be a stop on the Gallery of Ghoulish Home Tour...*if you dare!* Judging categories include Best Rookie, Crafiest Creeper, Best Use of Pumpkins, Best Use of Lighting, Best Use of Technology, Eeriest Haunt, and Family Fun. Register today at www.stcparks.org/halloween so you don't miss the Oct. 11 deadline.

Grave Reminders Cemetery Walk

Oct. 23, 2020, 7 p.m.

Bethlehem Lutheran, 1145 N. 5th Ave. (Rt. 25)

Join in an exclusive opportunity to walk through one of St. Charles' oldest cemeteries after dark. Explore the cemetery's dark corners, closely inspect the headstones to see what you might learn.

Learn about the history of St. Charles graveyards, and hear the stories of the individuals who found their final resting place in St. Charles. At each gravesite, guests will "encounter" a community figure and listen as they tell in short monologues about their lives, their joys, their sorrow, and their loves.

For more information, contact the [St. Charles History Museum](#).

Be extra careful, children are out



Trick-or-Treating 3-7 p.m. Oct. 31

IDPH Issues Halloween COVID-19 Guidelines

The Illinois Department of Public Health has issued COVID-19 related guidance regarding Halloween trick-or-treating. [Click here to read the public health recommendations](#). Halloween is not a City-sponsored event, so please use your best judgement regarding whether or not to have your children go trick-or-treating door-to-door. And please follow mask, distancing, and hand sanitizing guidelines. If you do not feel comfortable handing out candy this year, simply turn off your porch lights. Trick-or-treating hours are from 3 to 7 p.m. on Oct. 31. [Click here for general Halloween safety tips from our Police Department](#).

Annual Pumpkin Smash!

Nov. 7, 9 a.m. to noon

St. Charles Public Works Facility, 1405 South 7th Avenue

St. Charles Natural Resources Commission is hosting their annual Pumpkin Smash on Saturday, November 7. Bring your pumpkins, jack-o-lanterns and gourds to the St. Charles Public Works Facility from 9 a.m. to noon. This is a drive-thru event, but participants are invited to get out and toss, smash, roll, or simply drop off pumpkins to be composted. Be sure to remove non-biodegradable materials (such as candles, plastic stickers and yarn) to avoid contaminating organic materials collected for composting. The event will be located at 1405 South 7th Avenue; watch for signs off of 7th Avenue.